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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 004529

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SUBJECT: MCNS DECEMBER 3

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (S//REL GBR AUS) SUMMARY: During the December 3 Ministerial Council on National Security, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki:

-- Responded to reports of attacks on downtown Baghdad banks and government ministries by calling for "Green Zone" like security zones in strategic areas of the capital;

-- Called for decisive action against all illegal armed groups and condemned negotiating with them, as had occurred in Samawah.

Maliki also reviewed progress on recently-launched Diyala security operations. Deputy Prime Minister Zobaie had a heated exchange with Minister of Defense Abdul Qader Mufraji after he alleged that the Minister had failed to act on the reports that he had submitted on various security issues.  
END SUMMARY.

#### DISTURBANCES

12. (S//REL GBR AUS) The meeting began with Maliki inquiring about a possible disturbance in Basra. He said that decisive action must be taken against illegal armed groups, whether gangsters or militia. The Governor of Samawah had reported reaching an agreement with the militia, but he should not have been negotiating with them at all, Maliki said. He warned that militia could wreck the government. Maliki also reacted strongly to Finance Minister Jabr's report that his ministry had been subjected to an hours-long attack by insurgents. Jabr said that downtown banks had also been robbed. Maliki said that strategic commercial and government areas should be made into secure "green zones."

#### BAGHDAD SECURITY

13. (S//REL GBR AUS) During the weekly briefing on Baghdad security, the Minister of Defense reviewed plans to bring an additional four Iraqi Army battalions to Baghdad, to be deployed in the Karkh and Rusafa neighborhoods. Rubaie said that the latest revisions to the Baghdad Security Plan were being made in response to intelligence analysis that indicated that controlling the outskirts of Baghdad and six or seven key neighborhoods, such as Fadhil, was key to bringing security. Minister of State for National Security Waili, a former military engineer, said the area around Baghdad needed to be surrounded by trenches and berms defended by troops.

14. (S//REL GBR AUS) Rubaie characterized the new approach as offensively minded. The intent was to "break the back" of the terrorists so that security forces would not be reacting to

terrorists, but taking the initiative with targeted operations. Maliki specified that terrorist action should provoke a strong reaction, while targeted operations against those responsible for extrajudicial killings would be conducted on a planned basis.

5. (S//REL GBR AUS) The Commanding General of the Armed Forces, General Babakar, alluded to efforts to work with the Anbar tribes, which could be deployed to the South of Baghdad and other areas. 33 Sheikhs would each furnish 50 young men for military training. These tribal recruits could be used to provide intelligence. Maliki said that money had been given to the tribes to purchase weapons as the government had none to provide them. He counseled that this work must be consonant with the will of the tribal leaders in order to avoid creating inter-tribal conflict. Maliki said some tribes are unwilling to work under the provincial councils and said that new Tribal Councils would be created in some areas. General Babakar complained that Coalition Forces were not supporting the efforts of the Al Souda tribe to combat the terrorists in Anbar province.

16. (S//REL GBR AUS) Deputy Prime Minister Zobaie was critical of security efforts and changing plans. He asserted that security plans needed more time to work out before they could be evaluated. He listed a number of security problems he felt needed to be resolved, such as removing officers who fail to meet standards. He said the number of checkpoints should not be reduced, as was planned, and called for checkpoints to be manned by troops representing all sects and security services. Minister of Defense Abdul Qader Mufraji responded that the MCNS was not the appropriate forum for a tactical discussion of checkpoints - three-quarters of which were manned by the police. Zobaie continued, alleging that Mufraji had failed to take action on reports he had

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submitted. The Minister of Defense vigorously defended himself and a heated exchange lasting about ten minutes ensued.

#### DIYALA SECURITY

17. (S//REL GBR AUS) Minister of Defense Abdul Qader Mufraji reported that the Diyala security plan was underway; forces had been deployed and were already conducting successful operations. 43 terrorists had been arrested, a kidnapping victim had been freed and car bombs had been seized, Mufraji said. Maliki commented that there were both tribal and sectarian dimensions to the conflict in Diyala and disclosed that he had a productive meeting with Diyala Sheikhs the previous day. He said Diyala had a foreign fighter problem as well as a concentration of Baathists. Minister of Finance Bayan Jabr urged the Defense Minister to publicize the seizure of the car bombs.

18. (S//REL GBR AUS) Interior Minister Bolani said that he had told Diyala tribal leaders to unify. There was pressure on the security forces in Diyala, he said, and a need for additional security forces. We can recruit more, he said, but weapons and training are the limiting factor. He hoped that this could be expedited as Diyala's police force was in bad shape. In response to National Security Advisor Rubeia's comment that Sunni extremists of the 1920 Revolution Brigade had infiltrated the police, Bolani admitted that some had been caught planting bombs and said that they were being dealt with according to procedures.

#### SECURITY FORCE PROBLEMS

19. (S//REL GBR AUS) DPM Zawbai commented that CPA 71, which allows provinces to hire police, must be amended. Commanding General Babakar added that the erstwhile Iraqi National Guard battalions raised during the CPA era were also problematic. More than seventy soldiers had protested deployment the previous day. He had instructed that they be dismissed, he

claimed, as more than 32,000 enlistees were waiting to be called to duty. Maliki commented that both effective punitive action and incentives were needed. Rubaie said of 5 Iraqi Army divisions in Diyala that, with one-third of its troops on leave and another third engaged in service tasks at any time, there were not enough combat troops available for the large area the division had to control. He said that the police were infiltrated and the Army too small. In response to the Prime Minister's query on how to remedy the situation, Defense Minister Mufraji said that a new brigade was being sent to Diyala, although it had limited mobility. Mufraji looked forward to the March completion of training for new forces.

KHALILZAD